

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 CU-04 /131 W

----- 051026

R 230422Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8292

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 18333

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, VS

SUBJECT: IMMOLATION IN NHA TRANG

FOLLOWING TEL RECEIVED FROM NHA TRANG OCT 19 REPEATED TO YOU. QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L NHA TRANG 0888

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT VS

SUBJECT: IMMOLATION IN NHA TRANG

1. THE SELF-IMMOLATION OF A YOUNG MONK (THICH VIEN DAO, AKA LE AI MINH, AGED 18 OR 20) AT THE NHA TRANG AN QUANG PAGODA THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 17 HAS HAD NO IMPORTANT EFFECT ON POLITICAL LIFE HERE. JUDGING FROM THE REACTION OF OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES, NOT EVEN WELL-INFORMED VIETNAMESE ARE GENERALLY AWARE OF THE EVENT. THE REMAINS OF THE MONK, WHO WAS ATTENDING A RELIGIOUS CONVOCATION IN NHA TRANG, WERE RETURNED HOME TO DALAT TO HIS TEACHER EARLY ON THE MORNING OF THE 18TH.

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2. WIDER POLITICAL IMPACT MAY BE GENERATED BY THE

PUBLICATION OF SOME OF THE SIX LETTERS WHICH THE MONK LEFT BEHIND. THE LEADING AN QUANG VENERABLE IN NHA TRANG, VEN. THICH THIER BINH, INFORMED THE POLITICAL OFFICER THAT THE LETTERS--ADDRESSED RESPECTIVELY TO THE TROOPS OF BOTH SIDES, THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM, THOSE WHO ARE TRYING TO PROLONG THE WAR, THE BUDDHIST CLERGY, HIS MOTHER, AND HIS BROTHER AND SISTER--WERE IN THE POSSESSION OF THE MONK'S TEACHER, WHO WILL DELIVER THE PERSONAL ONES AND SEE TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE ONES ADDRESSED TO GENERAL AUDIENCES. THE VENERABLE DESCRIBED THE LETTERS AS CONTAINING GENERAL PLEAS FOR PEACE, AND SPECIFICALLY SAID THEY WERE NOT ANTI-GVN. (THE VENERABLE HAD TOLD THE POLITICAL OFFICER ON AN EARLIER OCCASION THAT BUDDHIST POLITICAL ACTIVITY HAD PROVED TO BE FUTILE, AND WAS NO LONGER A PROFITABLE TACTIC.)

3. A LEADING BUDDHIST LAYMAN IN NHA TRANG SAYS NONE OF HIS FRIENDS IN THE CLERGY OR LAITY BELIEVE THE IMMOLATION WAS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED, RATHER THAT IT WAS AN ACT OF GRACE. THOUGH AGREEING WITH THE POLITICAL OFFICER THAT SUCH ACTS ARE ALIEN TO THE MAYAHANA TRADITION, AND ARE IN FACT BAZARRE, HE NEVERTHELESS MAINTAINED THAT MOST OF THE CLERGY, AT LEAST, FOUND IT DEMONSTRATIVE OF ADMIRABLE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT. SPEAR UNQTE  
MARTIN

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DEATHS, BUDDHISTS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Executive Order:** GS MARTIN  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 06 DEC 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Subject:** IMMOLATION IN NHA TRANG FOLLOWING TEL RECEIVED FROM NHA TRANG OCT 19 REPEATED TO YOU. QTE  
**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, VS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005